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# INPORT NEWS

SERVING PORT COLBORNE • WAINFLEET • SHERKSTON • LOWBANKS • ISSUE NO. 35 VOLUME 16

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■ **BOG:** Mike Waddington studies fires in peat bogs



Sphagnum moss, a natural species which is resistant to fire, is shown in this photo supplied by the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority.

## Professor keen to study bog fire

DAVE JOHNSON  
InPort News

**HAMILTON** — Mike Waddington is keen on getting into the Wainfleet Bog and gathering samples of soil and peat to take back to his lab at McMaster University.

Studying burned peat from the recent fire could help the professor in the university's school of geography and earth sciences and associate director of the McMaster Centre for Climate Change, and his students, develop a moisture code for peat bogs.

"We want to take peat core samples and start to research

and follow the recovery. We're always keen to see impact sites ... it helps us understand more."

With the peat samples, Waddington and his students could see how it burns and add that data to a model to develop the moisture code.

"The code would help us alert fire managers in the province when peat bogs are susceptible to burning," said Waddington, an internationally-recognized expert in ecohydrology, an interdisciplinary field studying the interactions between water and ecosystems.

see **BOG FIRE** | page 2



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# upfront

## ■ BOG FIRE

# Vegetation could limit damage

FROM PAGE 1

Waddington has been studying peatland wildfire, drought, and mining impacts and reclamation for the past 25 years and said the fire, in the northwest section of the bog, could have been far worse than it was.

While he did not visit the scene, the professor has visited the bog in the past and has worked on bog fires in northern Ontario and studied fires in Alberta, like the Slave Lake fire in 2011.

The area of the bog that caught on fire, which is believed to have been sparked by a lightning strike, was one the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority had started restoration efforts.

Waddington toured the bog many years ago and knows the conservation authority has done a lot of restoration work in the meantime.

"The conservation authority should be congratulated on the restoration work it has done. Without active restoration a lot of the natural vegetation does not come back," he said, adding that while they stopped the fire from being worse.

The Wainfleet Bog, which once stretched from the Grand River to Willoughby Marsh, on the outskirts of Niagara Falls, was mined

**The conservation authority should be congratulated on the restoration work it has done. Without active restoration a lot of the natural vegetation does not come back."**

Mike Waddington

for peat from the 1920s into the 1980s. Part of the mining operation saw drainage ditches created to remove water from the site.

Those mining operations saw the loss of sphagnum moss, which holds water, through a lot of the bog.

"Sphagnum moss is quite resistant to wildfire."

Waddington said without the moss, the peat is less dense and that makes it easier for fire to take hold and burn. To make things worse, there are species of birch trees in the bog which are not native and take up a lot of water. The trees are also bigger and once they catch fire, can provide enough energy for fire to surface from underground.

Most bog fires burn underground, but will surface if there is a fuel source.

"Luckily this was one of the wetter areas of the bog and the fire burned a lot shallower."

Fires in peat propagate vertically the professor said, but can be quite stubborn.

The recent fire in

Wainfleet's bog was estimated to be at a depth of 12 centimetres and up to a metre in places. The Slave Lake fire he and his students are studying saw the peat burning at depths of two to 20 centimetres deep.

"Natural peat land fires burn shallower and the land recovers well ... peat land that had been drained, the fires burn deeper and burn out of control."

Another problem with peat fires is they can smoulder for years underground. One of the last fires in the Wainfleet Bog started in 1998 and came back in 1999 and 2000.

"They are very hard fires to put out ... they can go on over the winter and for years. In some cases they have to dig the peat up and re-wet it."

Waddington said that was done in Slave Lake. The land was bulldozed down to the mineral soil and was mixed up with the peat to prevent any smouldering material from re-igniting.

And while the fires themselves can be dangerous and

potentially deadly, so to can the smoke from the blazes.

"Peat fires generate a lot of particulate matter 2.5 microns or smaller."

That matter floating through the air can cause respiratory problems, Waddington said, and added peat fires can release toxic materials, like naturally-occurring mercury. Peat bogs can be 10,000 to 12,000 years old and materials like mercury are trapped in it over that period of time.

Waddington said a peat fire in Russia caused a number of respiratory-related deaths because of smoke.

"The bog there (Russia) is a much bigger system."

Not only are the peat fires potentially deadly to humans and animals, but they are also very costly.

Waddington said the cost of putting out and mopping up after peat fires can run between \$500 million and \$1 billion a year.

"Just the couple of weeks in Wainfleet would be a lot of money."

To prevent future fires, or at least minimize them, he said restoring the bog, as the conservation authority is, by blocking up drainage ditches and allowing the water back in and restoring the natural vegetation is the right direction.



STEVE BAILEY Supplied photo  
Professor Mike Waddington, of McMaster University's school of geography and earth sciences and associate director of the McMaster Centre for Climate Change, and his students study peat fires in Canada and would love to get into the Wainfleet Bog, which just had a fire.

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# portraits

■ **WAINFLEET BOG:** Replanting native species

## Restoration efforts show positive results

DAVE JOHNSON  
inPort News

**WAINFLEET** — It once stretched from the Grand River to Willoughby Marsh, taking in more than 20,000 hectares (approximately 50,000 acres) of land covering Wainfleet and Port Colborne to the edge of Niagara Falls.

But 80 years of peat extraction shrunk the Wainfleet Bog to 1,460 hectares (3,607 acres), still leaving it the largest, least disturbed bog in southern Ontario.

"It's a provincially-significant wetland and a good representation of a bog ... it's nationally important," said Kim Frohlich, an ecologist with Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority.

The conservation authority oversees 809.4 hectares of the bog, which it purchased in 1995, and the Ministry of Natural Resources owns and oversees the rest.

Frohlich said the bog shrunk

in size over the years because of peat mining operations that ran from the 1920s to the 1980s. Those mining operations saw ditches made across the bog as a way to drain water for easier access to the peat.

"A lot of agricultural land was created as well," she said, adding there is farmland surrounding parts of the bog and a stone quarry that butts up against it.

People on Hwy. 58 heading to or from Port Colborne drive through the bog every day without realizing it. The bog touches both sides of the highway in the area of Stonebridge Dr. Businesses on Stonebridge Dr. also sit on what was once part of the bog.

Draining the bog of water made for much dryer conditions and harmed the habitat for many species of plants and animals. It also allowed invasive species, like European birch trees to move into the bog.

\*European birch trees suck

up a lot of water. A committee I'm on wanted to see all those trees cut down ... we removed half and left them on the ground to be shelter for various animals," said Frohlich.

One of the animals affected by the change in habitat was the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake. The snake is a threatened and protected species and the Wainfleet Bog is one of only four remaining sites for the reptiles.

"It's the only bog habitat for the rattlesnake ... it hibernates in the peat."

Snapping turtles and other turtle species were also affected by the drop in water levels inside the bog, which was once home to a prisoner of war camp in the Second World War.

Local historian Erno Rossi said the bog was also famous during American Prohibition.

"Long before the POWs got there though there were a number of stills that produced excellent alcohol," he said, adding the homemade booze was run out of Wainfleet and Port Colborne across the lake.

He said the stills had to be very portable because the smell of the process was easily identifiable.

"The most original still was one built on wheels that when empty could be backed into a deep pond and left there until it was needed again. Then the wagon was rolled out of the pond and making booze started again."

After prohibition ended, peat extraction continued and during the Second World War German prisoners worked in the bog.

"The camp at the end of Erie Peat Rd. held about 50 of the best-treated prisoners in the history of warfare. And their blueberry wine was excellent. For the most part these were merchant marine sailors who were on German boats in Canadian waters when war broke out. They were paid \$2.50 per day, with \$2 deducted for room and board leaving them with 50 cents per day. One day per week they were allowed to buy food in town and then were



ANNE YAGI Supplied Photo

Cotton grass is shown in the Wainfleet Bog in this photo taken by the Ministry of Natural Resources' Anne Yagi.

allowed to go to the City Hotel where they could buy draft beer at five cents a glass."

Guards at the camp, he said, did not carry guns and were more like father figures than goons.

"The prisoners were taken to the Imperial Theatre on King St. (in Port Colborne) once a week to watch the movies."

Rossi said one escapee grabbed a kick bike and pedalled west on Hwy. 3 and was stopped the next day in Branford by police who asked where he was going.

"He replied that he wanted to see the Rocky Mountains. He was shipped to a high security POW camp in the north. Five other prisoners walked away from camp to escape. There were no wire fences or guard towers. Most were picked up in Quebec. If they had gone to the U.S. they would have been considered tourists," he said, adding the escapes happened before the U.S. entered the war. "I asked a prisoner if he ever planned to escape. He looked at me and replied in excellent English, 'Escape back to

Germany and then be sent to the eastern front to fight the Russians and freeze my jewels off. No!"

While the remnants of the stills, prisoner of war camp and peat mining operation are long gone, Frohlich said the scars still remain.

But, she said, the conservation authority is working to restore the bog to its natural state as much as it can.

"It will never be pristine."

Restoration work began in 2000 on the western half of the bog, with the eastern half being left alone for now and to allow existing species to adapt to the changes if needed.

Frohlich said peat ditches were blocked up so more water would stay on site and sphagnum moss is one of the species being replanted in the bog. Sphagnum moss is a natural species and it is very resistant to fire because it holds a lot of water and the conservation authority wants to ensure that moss, along with other natural mosses, accumulate.

"We made shallow surface indentations to mimic the

topography of the bog," she said, adding those indentations will help hold water as well.

"The bog is actually an important water source as it acts as a sponge and slowly releases water to adjacent streams."

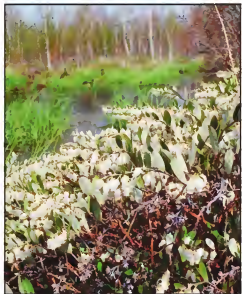
Those streams are home to aquatic life.

Frohlich said water wells were also put around the restoration area to keep water close to the surface and not affect surrounding landowners.

With the changes in water and the planting of the sphagnum moss, other native species were planted as well, things like leatherleaf, Labrador tea, sheep laurel, blueberry, and cotton and sphagnum moss.

A monitoring program has been put in place to evaluate rehabilitation activities including groundwater levels, vegetation changes and sensitive animal populations.

"The bog is a unique habitat and ecosystem, we want to ensure its biodiversity is maintained and maintain a healthy habitat. We're starting to see some positive results," said Frohlich.



SUPPLIED PHOTO

Leatherleaf, one of the native species in the Wainfleet Bog is shown in bloom.

# INPORT NEWS

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## ■ ourview

## DSBN trustees erred

**W**ant to see dying flames fanned into a roaring political fire? No problem.

Just have elected officials say they've received legal advice to shut up about a public matter.

Then watch as the politicians get scorched.

That's pretty much what happened to some District School Board of Niagara trustees who found themselves the target of West Park Secondary School conspiracy theorists.

In case you missed it, here are the bare bones of the story: Unbeknownst to the public, six DSBN trustees gathered socially at the Thorold home of colleague Dale Robinson, and at some point talked about the board's accommodation review. A short time later, at the regular board meeting, trustees voted 6-5 to keep Thorold Secondary School open and close West Park.

Once made aware of the secret chat, however sketchy the details, you could hardly blame West Park folks for feeling suspicious about how things went down, particularly since Robinson was the board's most rabid champion of Thorold Secondary. A group of West Park supporters charged that the discussion at Robinson's house was improper and served to stifle debate at the subsequent board meeting that dealt with the school-closing issue. The informal trustee gathering is one of the complaints raised in the group's appeal to have the ministry of education review the board's decision to close West Park. The board has since responded to the charge of impropriety, asserting it's much ado about nothing.

The trustees had gathered to support Robinson's husband, who was terminally ill and has since passed away. The accommodation review was discussed casually, acknowledged the board in its filing to the ministry, but the conversation had no impact on the final decision. The board noted that of the six trustees in attendance, three voted against closing West Park.

Welland trustee Sue Barnett was more pointed in her response when contacted Tuesday. "The West Park people need to get a grip," she said. Always nice to get a blunt, no-holds-barred comment from an elected official, right?

Problem is, that wasn't the case when word of the trustee gathering first broke. A couple of trustees said they couldn't go into details about the meeting on the advice of the board lawyer.

Whatever happened or was said at Robinson's house that day almost certainly had no impact on the board decision to support the staff recommendation to close West Park.

But the wisdom of that many trustees discussing among themselves such a politically sensitive topic so close to the board vote is certainly open to debate. And trustees attending the gathering should have been a willing participant in that debate. Suggesting legal advice prevented them from doing so was a cop-out.

## ■ PLANTS: Invasive species being removed

# Bog home for the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake

DAVE JOHNSON  
InPort News Staff

**WAINFLEET** — You don't have to go deep into the Wainfleet Bog to see some of the unique animal species that can be found there.

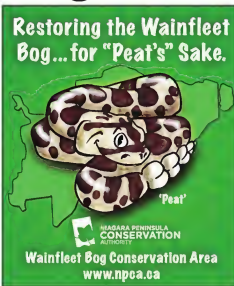
"You can see all sorts of interesting butterflies right from the parking lot, like the Question Mark and Red Spotted Purple butterflies, ones you don't see in other areas," said Kim Frohlich, an ecologist with Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority.

Frohlich said the bog is actually an important migration point for butterflies.

Ensuring the bog remains a stable and healthy ecosystem for all sorts of animals and plants has been the conservation authority's mandate since it took over the area in 1995.

Since 2000, the conservation authority has been working on restoring the bog to its natural habitat as much as it can after 80 years of peat mining operations that took place.

Blocking off drainage ditches and allowing water to fill up areas of the bog is just one of the things being done, said Frohlich.



Supplied Graphic

She said invasive plant species, like European birch trees are being removed. Those trees suck up a huge amount of water and provide a fuel source for fires inside the bog.

While there are invasive plant/tree species in the bog, there are also plenty of native species still surviving or being reintroduced.

Plants like the carnivorous

sun dew, Labrador tea, cotton grass, leatherleaf, sheep laurel, and blueberry.

In addition to the plants, there are animals in the bog not found elsewhere. Turtle species call it home and it's also one of only four remaining sites for the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake in Ontario.

"It's the only bog habitat for the rattlesnake... it hibernates in the peat."

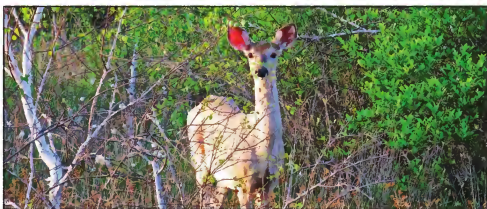
In the interior of the bog, Frohlich said many bird species can be found and it's also home to the largest white-tailed deer population in Niagara.

Around the exterior of the bog, wild turkeys can now be found and beavers have made a comeback as well.

The bog is currently closed to visitors because of the recent fire, but when it reopens people will once again be able to hike in and nature watch.

Frohlich said hiking is the only way into the bog, bicycles and motorized vehicles of any sort are not allowed in.

"It's a passive recreation area. We've installed boardwalks so people can walk through without disturbing the habitat."



ANNE YAGI Supplied Photo  
Anne Yagi.

A white-tailed deer is shown in the Wainfleet Bog in this photo taken by the Ministry of Natural Resources' Anne Yagi.

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■ **WAINFLEET BOG FIRE:** Underground peat fire contained, but will be monitored in weeks to come

# Bog off-limits to visitors

DAVE JOHNSON  
InPort News Staff



DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

A Ministry of Natural Resources truck sits in the background at the Wainfleet Bog behind a sign warning against open fires and smoking inside the area. The ministry said the fire in the bog is contained and under control and will spend today looking for any remaining hot spots.

**WAINFLEET** — A three-week-old fire in a remote section of the Wainfleet Bog is now contained and under control, but the area will continue to be monitored by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Wainfleet's fire chief.

"We'll be checking it over for the next few weeks," chief Harry Flagg said Wednesday. "The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority will be the lead agency now and will go through with their people. We'll work with them."

With no rain predicted for the near future, Flagg said officials want to ensure the area where the underground fire was does not flare up again.

A release from the ministry said its crews are preparing to demobilize from the bog, at the end of Erie Peat Rd., and were conducting final thorough examinations Thursday and today to identify and re-supply water to any hot spots that posed a risk of flaring up.

see **BOG CLOSED** | page 6

## Public Notice

Public Meeting for the  
Lake Erie Corridor Secondary Schools  
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## ■ BOG CLOSED

# Contingency plan in development for flare-ups

FROM PAGE 5

Ministry FireRangers were called to the slow-burning fire on Aug. 10. Since that time, the FireRangers laid 2,940 metres of hose and applied more than 2.27 million litres of water to the 13.6 hectares that were burning and creating smoke that drifted across three municipalities.

"The ministry attributes a large part of the success in the containment of the fire to exemplary co-operation, both with the township and Wainfleet fire officials, as well as with local businesses, including motels, restaurants and the Waterford Group Law Quarry," the release from the ministry said.

The ministry is working with Flagg and

the conservation authority to develop a contingency plan to respond to any possible flare-ups that may occur in the following weeks.

Flagg wanted to thank both the ministry and conservation authority for all the work the two agencies have done and said the fire couldn't have been fought and contained without everyone coming together.

The conservation authority said the bog is still closed and is asking residents and visitors to refrain from visiting the area.

Residents are asked to monitor the township's website for further information and updates at [www.wainfleet.ca](http://www.wainfleet.ca).

*dave.johnson@sunmedia.ca*

## ■ MARSHVILLE HERITAGE FESTIVAL: More than 400 volunteers make event a success

# The 19th century is alive and well

SARAH FERGUSON  
InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET—Preparations are underway for a heritage celebration expected to draw thousands of people to Wainfleet.

The 24th annual Marshville Heritage Festival running Sept. 1 to 3, couldn't be possible without the help of 400 volunteers who have spent the past four weeks preparing the village, said organizer Margaret Robertson.

The grounds of the Marshville Heritage Village will be filled with an arts and crafts show, costumed demonstrations of 19th-century chores,

food, entertainment, vendors, covered wagon rides, farm equipment and Ontario's only original steam sawmill.

A free concert featuring the Niagara Old Time Fiddlers and the Torchmen will be held in the Heritage Park at 6:30 p.m. on Sunday.

The festival also offers a three-day car show featuring models between the 1950s and 1970s. The Niagara British Car Club and Vintage Motorcycles Niagara Division will display vehicles the final day of the festival, said Robertson.

New this year is the 1873 Moulton Train Station, which moved from Marshagan Rd. in Dunnville to Marshville in

June. The train station was donated to the village by the Dunnville Culture and Heritage Foundation.

"The train station is not going to be open this year but people can view it," said Robertson.

The festival is open from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on the Saturday, from 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on the Sunday and from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the Monday.

Children under 10 years of age are admitted free. Tickets are \$6 each for people 10 and older. On Saturday, the admission for seniors will be \$5.

*sarah.ferguson@sunmedia.ca*

## RECIPE of the month

SEPTEMBER

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From left, Ken Dayboll and Bob Shoalts, longtime volunteers, were busy Tuesday afternoon preparing for the upcoming Marshville Heritage Festival. They checked to make sure all of the farm equipment, including the tractor Shoalts is seen here sitting on, is in good working condition.

SARAH FERGUSON Staff Photo

■ RECREATION: Boarders and BMXers await Lock &amp; facility

# Algoma earns skatepark naming rights

DAVE JOHNSON  
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — The shipping industry has come onboard and anchored fundraising efforts for the city's new skatepark at Lock 8 Park.

"Algoma (Central Corp.) gave a large donation and other marine-related industries and suppliers have also donated to the project," said Mayor Vance Badawey.

"We've had an overwhelming response from the (marine) industry," he said. "The community supports the industry

and it just wants to show its appreciation for that support."

Algoma has given the largest donation to date and has naming rights for the skatepark.

Badawey said Algoma didn't want to say how much it donated, but added the skatepark will be called the Algeport Skatepark.

The name is fitting, he said, because when completed, sometime in mid-October, the skatepark will look like a ship.

In addition to donations the city has received, the mayor's youth advisory council is out

**"The community supports the industry and it just wants to show its appreciation for that support."**

Mayor Vance Badawey

fundraising for the facility. The youth council set a goal of raising 10% of the cost of the skatepark, budgeted at just under \$847,000. The city itself did not have a goal when it came to donations.

Though the mayor didn't know how much the youth council has raised to date, he said the members are plug-

ging away. Port Colborne Professional Firefighters (International Association of Fire Fighters Local 2307) recently donated \$1,000 to the youth council for the skatepark just down the street from their headquarters.

Badawey said the city itself has raised \$124,100 toward the project.

LANDInc. designed the skatepark, at the south end of Lock 8 Park, and it is being built by Patterned Concrete. Badawey said construction

is on schedule with forms in place and concrete set to pour. He said the city is looking at a grand opening on Saturday, Oct. 13.

## SKATE PARK FACTS

- Lock 8 Park sits beside the Welland Canal and Lock 8, still one of the longest locks in the world
- There is a pavilion area at the park and a viewing area overlooking Lock 8
- The site was chosen because of its proximity to the fire hall
- It is easily accessible from most areas of the city



Work on the Algeport Skatepark continues at Lock 8 Park in Port Colborne. The facility is expected to be open in mid-October.

DAVE JOHNSON Staff Photo

## Kids Are *Really* Different

It probably won't come as a huge surprise but... kids are really quite different from us.

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Just 'growing up' is probably enough to send their nutritional needs off the scale, but factor in everything else and it's obvious that children have some fairly significant nutritional requirements.

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Let's face it, what child eats properly? Children are famously picky eaters and hardly ever seem to get the quantity and the quality nutrition they really need.

Try Kids Daily One. It's a full value multivitamin and mineral supplement that can help your child achieve and maintain good nutritional health.

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Information is provided for reference only. For specific health issues consult your local natural health practitioner.

## ■ SHERKSTON

# Damage \$75,000 in trailer fire

DAVE JOHNSON  
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Firefighters made quick work of a trailer fire Tuesday night at Sherkston Shores.

Port Colborne Fire and Emergency Services was called out just after 11 p.m. after a report of a golf cart

on fire inside the park off of Empire Rd.

"There were two golf carts outside of a trailer covered with a tarp that got going. Sherkston security tried to put the fire out, but it spread to a trailer," said fire Chief Tom Cartwright.

Cartwright said there was a bit of a delayed response because the original call

**The guys on the first truck did a great job and knocked the fire down"**

Fire Chief Tom Cartwright

was only for a golf cart on fire so only one fire truck was dispatched. Once that truck was almost at Sherkston, dispatch reported a trailer on fire as

well.

"We upgraded the call to a general alarm and had the volunteers head out. But the guys on the first truck did a great job and knocked

the fire down."

Cartwright said no one was home at the time of the fire. There were working smoke alarms inside the trailer.

There were no injuries in the fire, which also saw Niagara Regional Police respond, and Cartwright said damage was estimated at \$75,000. The trailer, he

said, was burned out at the one end and suffered heavy smoke damage.

Both golf carts were battery-powered and Cartwright said fire prevention officer Mike Bendis was at the scene on Wednesday looking into whether the fire was caused by an electrical problem with a charger for the carts.



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\* Sirloin - Marinated - Pepper - Seasoned - Herb & Garlic

\* Sirloin - Marinated - Pepper - Seasoned - Herb & Garlic

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\* Buffalo - Marinated - Pepper - Seasoned - Herb & Garlic

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| Yoga: Beginner       | 90   |           |        |         | 6:30pm |      |           | \$120  |
| Yoga: Gentle Flow    | 60   |           |        |         |        | 10am |           | \$120  |
| Yoga: Restorative    | 60   | 10am, 5pm |        | 10am    |        |      |           | \$120  |
| Yoga: Kundalini      | 90   |           |        | 5:30pm  |        |      |           | \$140  |
| Yogalates Relaxation | 45   | 7pm       |        | 12 noon |        |      |           | \$90   |
| Wellness Inventory   | 90   |           |        | 7:30pm  |        |      |           | \$140  |
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**Suite 4 - 1462 Pelham Street, Fonthill, ON. L0S1E0**

■ **NIAGARA CENTRAL AIRPORT:** Bruce MacRitchie resumes negotiations with airport commission

# Flight school staying put

ALLAN BENNER  
InPort News Staff

PELHAM — Bruce MacRitchie has spent more than 8,000 hours in the cockpits of planes, helicopters and just about everything else that flies.

But flying hasn't lost its magic for MacRitchie, who earned his wings more than 50 years ago.

The president of Welland Aero Center still yells "Yeehaw!" as his Cessna 410

leaves the ground on a short trip to Brantford's airport, Wednesday.

"I've been really fortunate with all the flying I've done. I've flown all kinds of airplanes," he says. "It's been a magic carpet, no question about it. You never get over the thrill of the flight, and I'm happy to share it with other people."

And he's not ready to retire yet.

In early July, the Niagara Central Airport commis-

**You never get over the thrill of the flight, and I'm happy to share it with other people."**

Bruce MacRitchie

sion announced that it was unable to negotiate a satisfactory lease agreement with MacRitchie and was ending its working relationship with the flight school he's run at the Pelham facility since 1979.

Now, after weeks of

uncertainty, MacRitchie has resumed negotiations with the commission.

He has agreed to some of the commission's terms such as lease payments, but there are still a few details to be worked out.

MacRitchie is "optimistic

and hopeful" those details can be resolved in the next few weeks.

"Really it's for myself and the customers and for the reputation that we've had," MacRitchie says. "You give birth to a company and you want to see it continue to flourish, and it's all part of the goal."

MacRitchie has had a great deal of support from the community during the past few months, as well as from former students including Bill Chernish, who is now a captain with AirTran Airways. Chernish joins MacRitchie as co-pilot on this Wednesday trip to Brantford.

"It's really fortunate that he's pushing on with this thing," Chernish says. "Most people would have thrown the towel in a long time ago." MacRitchie acknowledges that he's considered quitting several times recently.

He says the past few months have been very hard on his business, seven staff members as well as their clients.

He's lost about 10 prospective students who chose to learn to fly elsewhere because they didn't want to start their training not knowing if his program would continue.

See **FLIGHT SCHOOL** | page 13

AGCO

Alcohol and Gaming  
Commission of Ontario



## Notice of Liquor Licence Application

The following establishment has applied to the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario for a liquor licence under the *Liquor Licence Act*.

### Application for a Sales Licence

#### GALLEY (THE)

(To be known as: CANAL BOATHOUSE (THE))

124 WEST STREET

PORLT COLBORNE (Indoor and outdoor area)

Any resident of the municipality may make a written submission as to whether the issuance of the licence is in the public interest having regard to the needs and wishes of the residents. Submissions must be received no later than **September 22, 2012**. Please include your name, address and telephone number. If a petition is submitted to the Commission, please identify the designated contact person. **Note:** The AGCO gives the applicant copies of any objections. Anonymous objections are not considered.

The personal information gathered is collected under the authority of the *Liquor Licence Act*. The principal purpose of the collection is to assess eligibility for the issuance of a liquor sales licence. Copies of all objections are given to the applicant. The information may also be disclosed pursuant to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Questions about this collection should be directed to the Manager, Licensing and Registration, Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario at the address, telephone numbers or e-mail address listed below.

**Submissions to be sent to:** Licensing and Registration, Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario, 90 Sheppard Avenue East, Suite 200, Toronto, ON M2N 0A4. Tel.: 416-326-8700 OR Toll-free in Ontario: 1-800-522-2878. Fax: 416-326-5555. E-mail: [licensing@agco.on.ca](mailto:licensing@agco.on.ca)

**Pour des renseignements en français concernant cette annonce, veuillez écrire à :** Direction de l'inscription et de la délivrance des permis, Commission des alcools et des jeux de l'Ontario, 90, rue Sheppard Est, bureau 200, Toronto, ON M2N 0A4. Tél. : 416-326-8700 ou 1-800-522-2878 (interurbains sans frais en Ontario). Téléc. : 416-326-5555. Courriel : [licensing@agco.on.ca](mailto:licensing@agco.on.ca)

## REGISTRATION

September 1 & 2, 2012

from 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM



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- Young professional instructors certified in Cecchetti, CPR and First Aid
- Award winning choreography
- Professionally trained
- Low dancer to instructor ratio
- Low and competitive rates
- Abundant parking and convenient drop off-pickup area
- Classes designed for ages 3 to adults

**W<sup>2</sup> Dance Studio**  
263 Division Street, Welland, ON  
(yellow building at the rear of the property)

To make an appointment to talk with the instructors and tour the studio call

**905-734-6380**



## PORT CARES 26<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NOTICE

In accordance with its constitution and bylaws,  
the Annual General Meeting of Port Cares will be held on

**Tuesday, September 18, 2012  
at 6:30 p.m.**

for the following purposes:

1. Reading and approving the minutes from the 2011 AGM.
2. Receiving and approving the audited financial statements for the past fiscal year.
3. Election of the Board of Directors.
4. Other business.

Volunteer Recognition and Refreshments will follow AGM.

The Reach Out Food Centre, 61 Nickel St., Port Colborne

RSVP to [portcares@portcares.on.ca](mailto:portcares@portcares.on.ca) or by calling 905-434-3429 x245

A membership table will be available at 6 pm prior to the AGM.



## ■ FLIGHT SCHOOL

# Airport promotion to continue

## FROM PAGE 12

Still, MacRitchie hopes to "repair the damage" that's been done, and move on.

"We still have a loyal customer base," he says, adding important elements of the operation are still going strong like plane rentals, banner towing, and other services.

Chernish says MacRitchie has "continued to promote

this airport through all of the ups and downs that they've been through."

MacRitchie plans to continue promoting the airport. For instance, he now plans on resuming negotiations with Niagara College in the hope of establishing a diploma program for commercial pilots.

allan.benner@sunmedia.ca

## THE FLIGHT PLAN

■ Bruce MacRitchie opened his flight school at Niagara Central Airport in 1979.

■ On July 3, the airport commission announced that it would be ending its contract with MacRitchie, giving him 60 days to wrap up operations.

■ At about the same time, the commission signed a contract with its new manager, David Devine.



ALLAN BENNER Staff Photo

Bruce MacRitchie, right, president of Welland Aero Center, stands with one of his former students, Bill Chernish, who is now a captain with Airtran Airways. Despite recent uncertainty, MacRitchie said he's getting close to finalizing an agreement with the Niagara Central Airport commission to continue running his business there.



# HUGE EXPANSION

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EXPANDED STRENGTH TRAINING MACHINES ROOM AND EXPANDED CARDIO AREA**

**FREE**  
**TWO WEEK TRIAL MEMBERSHIP**  
EXPIRES ON SEPT. 9TH

ONE COUPON PER NEW CUSTOMER ONLY PLEASE.

**13% OFF**  
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## ■ WEST NILE: Prevalence of the virus increasing Public health department steps up efforts to quash mosquito-borne virus

ALLAN RENNERT  
InPort News Staff

THOROLD — As the prevalence of West Nile virus increases across North America this summer, Niagara's public health department has stepped up its efforts to protect residents from the potentially-fatal disease.

The region has been treating municipal catch basins throughout Niagara with larvicide for the past decade in the hope of reducing the number of mosquitoes responsible for spreading the virus. But this year, the region is increasing the number of treatments from three to four "because of what's going on around us," said Bill Hunter, a manager of environmental health for the health department.

"We can certainly see that there's been an upsurge across North America compared to previous years. ... There seems to be an increase throughout southern Ontario as well as many other geographic areas."

The region's contractor, Guelph-based Pestato Environmental Health Services, will be back in Niagara in the next few weeks, administering another

treatment of larvicide to municipal catch basins.

In addition to administering larvicide, the region has also run a West Nile virus surveillance program for the past decade. Students are hired each summer to trap mosquitoes. Mosquito pools are then tested for the virus.

Peter Jekel, who manages vector-borne disease health for the health department, said 12 mosquito pools have tested positive for the virus so far this summer.

It's the most Niagara has seen since 2002 when the virus was new to the area and 15 mosquito pools tested positive. Last year, 11 mosquito pools tested positive during the entire season.

Test results are similar across Ontario.

Public Health Ontario reported last week 312 mosquito pools across the province have tested positive for West Nile virus so far this year — second only to 2002 when 317 pools tested positive for the virus.

There have also been 49 human cases so far this year in Ontario.

see WEST NILE | page 15

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## ■ WEST NILE

# Outbreak in Texas claimed 21 lives

FROM PAGE 14

South of the border, Texas is dealing with an outbreak of the virus that has already claimed 21 lives and infected 586 people.

Niagara has yet to see a human case of the disease this year, but that could change.

"We're just reaching the point where traditionally we start to see human cases which is late August and early September," Hunter said.

He is encouraging people to be a little more vigilant when protecting themselves from mosquito bites.

"I think maybe three or four years ago as cases were dwindling, I think people became a little more complacent about it. We certainly encourage people at this stage to follow the instructions of pro-

tecting themselves."

There is still no effective vaccination to protect people from the virus.

"There's evidence to show that people have developed antibodies to the virus," Hunter said. "Some people have, but some people still continue to be at risk. Of course, none of us really know which of those two categories we fall in, so it's very wise to follow the precautionary route."

Jekel said warm temperatures this year may have increased the mosquito population, resulting in the increased prevalence of the virus among mosquito pools.

"If we'd have had a wetter summer, we would probably have had more issues around standing water which allows mosquitoes to breed."

allan.bonner@sunmedia.ca



QMI AGENCY File Photo

Peter Jekel, Niagara Region's manager of environmental health, said the number of mosquitoes infected with West Nile virus is on the rise.

## PROTECT AGAINST WEST NILE VIRUS

- Eliminate standing water by cleaning eave troughs, draining birdbaths and any item where water can collect. Even a coffee cup can hold enough water for mosquito breeding.
- Wear bug repellent with DEET, particularly if you plan to go outside in the early morning, evening or into a heavily wooded area.
- Wear clothing that covers exposed skin when possible.

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■ **ENVIRONMENT:** Township issuing call for tenders for system inspections

# Wainfleet looking for a better septic deal

ALLAN BENNER  
InPort News Staff

**WAINFLEET**—The township will look to the private sector in hope of reducing mandatory septic system inspection costs for lake-shore area residents.

Affected property owners will likely save about \$150 each as a result.

Aldermen voted to issue a call for tenders from engineering firms to inspect septic systems of as many as 1,200 homes in the area affected by Niagara Region's boil water advisory issued due to ground water contamination.

The township will also call for tenders in the hope of finding a contractor to

handle Ontario Building Code applications, approvals and inspections for new septic systems as well as any repair work that might be required on faulty septic systems.

The changes were made as a result of a July 17 public meeting where residents presented a 500-signature petition expressing

concerns about a plan that would have required them to pay about \$550 for septic system inspections every three years.

Tuesday, Wainfleet operations director Greg Wuisman told aldermen he's received written estimates from engineering firms that could inspect affected properties for as

little as \$290 each. Wuisman said he anticipates final bids from contractors will be within about 20% of that estimate.

Township treasurer Robyn Madere said Wainfleet will still need to charge about \$100 per inspection for billing and collection services for a total charge of about \$400 for property owners.



Madere

Wuisman

see **SEPTIC SYSTEMS** | page 17

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## ■ SEPTIC SYSTEMS

# Region asked to take over mandatory inspections

FROM PAGE 16

Mayor April Jeffs said the charge for billing and collection services seemed excessive.

"Charging \$120,000 to process 1,200 invoices is a

heck of a lot of money," she said, garnering laughs from the audience of about 50 people.

She asked if that part of the project could be handled by a contractor as well.

Wulsman said the contrac-

tors he contacted weren't interested in handling billing and administrative aspects.

Ald. Ted Hesselts pointed out that a septic system inspection for real estate purposes costs about \$350 total.

Wulsman said a real estate inspection "is quite a bit less work" because it doesn't require the information to be added to a database. He said the \$350 charge for real estate inspection is under review and may be

increased.

During the July 17 meeting, aldermen also asked Wulsman to consider asking the region to take over mandatory inspections. In an Aug. 9 letter, Niagara public works commissioner Ken

Brothers said region staff will not support taking on responsibility for the project, although a final decision would rest with regional council.

see **SEPTIC SYSTEMS** | page 20



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## ■ SEPTIC SYSTEMS

## New staff members hired

FROM PAGE 17

Township council's decision will have an impact on Wainfleet's engineering department which has already hired new staff members and purchased a new truck for the inspection program.

Wutsman said one of the

new staff members could be retained if the township opts to continue administration of inspections and permits required for faulty systems.



Jeff

Ald. David Wyatt amended the initial motion to include a separate tender process for the administrative aspects of the project, so aldermen will have the information they need to make an informed decision about whether or not to hire a contractor or retain the existing staff member.

allan.benner@sunmedia.ca



ALLAN BENNER  
Staff Photo

Wainfleet's senior private sewage system inspector Caitlin Wood is pictured in this file photo. She is part of an assessment of the condition of 1,200 septic systems at homes in the township's lakeshore area.



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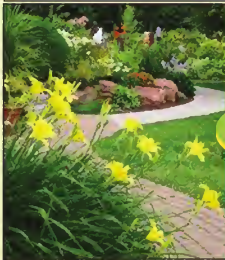
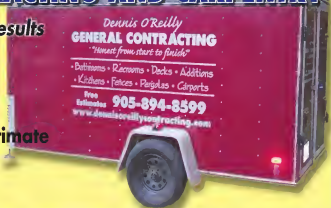
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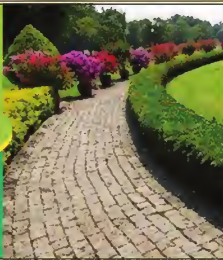


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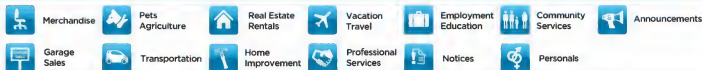
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## Apartments A610

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